

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR KATHRYN BARGER

FEBRUARY 8, 2022

ENHANCING DEVELOPMENT SERVICES IN THE SANTA CLARITA VALLEY

In 2010, the City of Santa Clarita and the County of Los Angeles initiated a joint planning effort, called *One Valley One Vision*, to guide the future of the Santa Clarita Valley. Major goals of the *One Valley One Vision* joint planning effort were to achieve greater cooperation between the county and the city, coordinated planning for roadways, infrastructure, and resource management, and enhanced quality of life for all who live and work in the Santa Clarita Valley.

In 2012, both the city and the county adopted *One Valley One Vision* as the guiding planning document for the growth and future of the Santa Clarita Valley. Since 2012, the Santa Clarita Valley has continued to grow, in line with the projected population and development growth forecasted in the *One Valley One Vision* Plan. The Santa Clarita Valley Economic Development Corporation (SCVEDC) forecasts an annual population growth of 1.3% through 2024.

This rapid rate of increase will result in additional 23,600 residents in the Santa Clarita Valley. In its 2021 Economic Outlook Report, the SCVEDC notes that the majority of this population growth will be due to the FivePoint Valencia development. The 2021 Economic Outlook Report also notes that much of the population growth is tied to new job opportunities and housing development. In addition to the FivePoint development and the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan, other significant housing development is currently planned and in process.

In early 2020, the county was assigned a Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) number of more than 90,000 additional housing units that are needed to be planned for in unincorporated areas. In addition, as the county continues to grapple with a housing shortage and affordability crisis, it is incumbent upon the county to ensure its permitting and entitlement processes are being streamlined to help meet the challenge of building this critically needed housing.

Recently, the SCVEDC noted challenges facing the development community in the Santa Clarita Valley, which finds itself removed from the heart of the county's operations in the urban basin. In their letter, they note that the existing one-stop center located in the Santa Clarita County Civic Center (Civic Center) has limited services that

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do not fully meet the requirements for complying with the various county department plan checks, submittals, and other approvals. They further note that these limitations can create duplications of work, involve numerous, individual trips to county offices, and require significant project tracking and sequencing to ensure approvals are not held up by minor details.

Their letter further noted that while EPIC-LA, the county's enterprise online permitting system, has helped reduce the burden on permittees and applicants, in-person meetings and interactions are required for coordination across permitting departments. In addition, there are county departments involved in permitting and development review processes that are not fully integrated into the online system. In June 2021, I authored a motion to continue the streamlining and efficient deployment of EPIC-LA, including a directive to ensure all county departments involved in these processes rapidly adopt the online permitting system.

However, there are additional opportunities to support the development and construction of new housing in the region, by understanding the need for additional, coordinated services and the need for co-location of county departments in the Civic Center, establishing a true, regional one-stop permitting office, similar to those in East Los Angeles and Montebello.

Additionally, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD) recently moved into a newly constructed station creating an opportunity to evaluate the future use of the old station located at the Civic Center.

LASD has also expressed an interest in retaining the use of the old station in order to accommodate the growing needs of services in line with projected population growth.

I, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors direct the Chief Executive Officer, in conjunction with the Department of Regional Planning, Department of Public Works, Department of Public Health, Fire Department, Sheriff's Department, Treasurer and Tax Collector, and any other relevant Departments that interact with the development and building community, to review the existing County operations at the Santa Clarita Civic Center and report back in writing in 90 days with recommendations on ways to enhance current operations to provide a fully operational, regional, one-stop center. The analysis should also include consideration of the Sheriff's current and future needs and whether those needs are best served within the Civic Center complex or elsewhere.

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